



Date: February 5, 2015

To: Hon. Larry Butler, Co-Chair  
Hon. Gary Holder Winfield, Co-Chair  
Members of the Housing Committee

From: Jude Carroll, Community Development Specialist, Connecticut Housing Coalition

Re: **Proposed Bills SB 123, SB 171, SB 172, SB 403, SB 407, HB 5055, HB 5254, HB 5306, HB 5576, HB 5579, HB 5581, HB 5582, HB 5802, HB 5803, HB 6162, HB 6127, HB 6128, HB 6129, HB 6131, HB 6135, HB 6139**

Good evening Senator Holder Winfield, Representative Butler, and members of the Housing Committee. My name is Jude Carroll; I'm the Community Development Specialist at the Connecticut Housing Coalition (CHC). The Coalition represents the broad, vibrant network of community-based affordable housing activity that is happening across the state. Our more than 250 member organizations include nonprofit developers, human service agencies, resident associations, and diverse other housing practitioners and advocates. Founded in 1981, the Coalition works to expand housing opportunity and to increase the quantity and quality of affordable housing in Connecticut.

**I'm here to testify in opposition to the proposed bills that would alter or eliminate the Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals Process.** The Housing Coalition opposes these proposals for one very simple, yet compelling reason: Connecticut is a very long way from meeting the need for affordable housing in every city and town in the state.

It's important to put our discussion today in context.

Here in Connecticut, rents continue to rise and incomes are stagnant. Affordable housing helps people get and keep a roof over their heads. Yet only a handful of communities have an adequate supply of affordable housing.

In fact, the National Low Income Housing Coalition estimates that Connecticut needs 90,734 affordable and available homes to meet current need.

- the statute has led to creation of 25,000 affordable housing units statewide since inception.
- those are 25,000 homes for working families, seniors, young adults just starting out, people with disabilities, veterans and other people who make a community vibrant. people get and keep

a roof over their heads.

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- those are 25,000 homes for working families, seniors, young adults just starting out, people with disabilities, veterans and other people who make a community vibrant.

Who needs an affordable home? And how is Connecticut doing in terms of production? If you look at the numbers, you'll see a very meager picture of affordable housing. There are several population groups whose member households need affordable housing: the elderly, disabled, those in the workforce, and those with low income. Serving one particular group does not eliminate the needs of the others.

Jude Carroll  
Testimony before the Housing Committee  
February 5, 2015

The gap between need and supply varies by household income, being greatest among those with extremely low income. In 2014, there were 102 available affordable units for every 100 renter households with income under 80 percent AMI—illustrating no gap between need and supply. However, among very low-income and extremely low-income renter households, we see a different story. There were only 64 available, affordable units for every 100 very low-income households and only 37 available, affordable units for every 100 extremely low income renter households. Income that qualified for 80 percent AMI was \$54,404. Thirty percent of households in Connecticut had income below 80 percent AMI in 2014.

### ***Connecticut's Home-Building Record***

Between 2003 and 2012, Connecticut ranked 50<sup>th</sup> among all state, Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico for the number of units built per capita. And some analysts believe that what the state did build was nowhere near what households needed, meaning Connecticut built an abundance of four bedroom McMansions and very few rentals, condos, townhouses and starter homes.

Jude Carroll  
Testimony before the Housing Committee  
February 5, 2015

If we look at the stock of affordable rental homes by town, we see that there are very few communities that have reach the affordable housing land use threshold of 10 percent. According to the 2012 Affordable Housing Appeals List, only 31 towns across the state have at least 10 percent of their housing stock categorized as affordable, leaving 138 towns reporting in at less than 10 percent. In fact, 18 towns have less than 1 percent of their housing units affordable.

***Statement of Need***

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Connecticut needs 90,734 units of affordable housing for low-income working families. C.G. § 8-30g has resulted in the construction of thousands of affordable units. And, because affordable units are typically part of mixed-income projects, several thousand market rate units have also resulted from §8-30g. Our state and local officials need to build on the success of § 8-30g along with expanding funding for incentive housing zones.

I've attached pictures of multi-family units that were built in several towns under 8-30g.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this afternoon.

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*Photos of 8-30g Developed Properties*



Old Oak Village, Wallingford



Arbor Commons, Berlin



Brookfield Crossing, Brookfield



Summerdale, North Haven



Flagg Road Cooperative, West Hartford



Old Farms Crossing, Avon



Lexington Meadows, Bethel